Radio Days

WTCC, WCCS and now WFCS at 107.7-- and anywhere at wfcsradio.com

Vol. 4, Spring 2018

Editor

Paul Koscak '73

Contributors

Deborah Wilson; John Sarra; "Bungalow" Bill Walsh; Megan Colleran; Victoria Minervino

Features

40 years of radio ■ *After-hours at the dorm* ■ *Two members: how they joined* ■ *Selling radio*

WFCS alumni again kick off homecoming

Saturday, Oct. 10, was more like July 4th than Columbus Day weekend--80 degrees, blazing sun--perfect for homecoming 2017. Those small Blue Devil towels among the giveaways at the morning brunch got good use. By the time brunch began, WFCS alumni along with some current radio club staff already packed in a full morning of fun, camaraderie and shows.

First and early, WFCS's alumni gathering remains homecoming's opening event, this time drawing a notable 21 alumni. At 7 a.m. the studio door unlocked, the lights went on and Steve Strinie '83 once again launched the morning block of WFCS alumni shows well before the brunch coffee brewed. Here are a few scenes.

Top: **Robb Warner '77; Elaine Minor '84;**
Row 1: Guy Esposito '85; ■ Bill Pearse '75, Dianne Zareski '74 ■ Tony Augeri '73 ■ Tom Larson '74; Steve Mead '76; Paul Grange '74
Row 2: Steve Strinie '83; Sue Sweeney, Student Center associate director; Larry Mucci '01; Randy Shamber '84 ■ Steve Strinie sampling the goodies ■ Dick Wiszniak '73; Gil Gigliotti, professor, Department of English and host of WFCS's *Frank, Gil and Friends*.

Moody Blues and 40 years with Bill Walsh

Come to the party (May 6)

This year's annual Moody Blues party features "Bungalow" Bill Walsh who celebrates a one-of-a-kind milestone--40 years on the air! Mark your calendar for **May 6** to join Bill and all of us for an afternoon of fun and the biggest Moody Blues event yet. Bill will join host Steve Strinie as they play some deep cuts from the MB repertoire and reflect on time at WFCS.
Between sets feel free to add your own MB trivia, along with WFCS, WCCS and CCSU anecdotes as far as **36 watts** will take them (For radio club alumni from the WCCS 670 AM or the 90.1 FM 10-watt era, 36 watts is like being on WABC!).

Here's the afternoon plan:

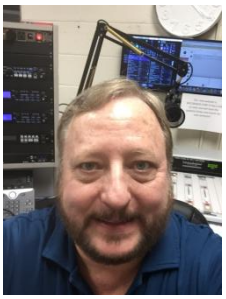
1 p.m., Meet at the Elks Lodge, 30 Washington St. New Britain Elks directions.

The lodge is a private setting where we can socialize. Alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks can be purchased there, but food is very limited. The solution: **Stop earlier at nearby Pizza Pal pizza pal** 264 S. Main St. New Britain **directions for takeout and bring it to the Elks.**

3 p.m. Join the Moody Blues party at the WFCS studio. If the building is closed (unlikely), call (860) 832-1883/1077 for entry.

Looking Back Four Decades

By "Bungalow" Bill Walsh



We often do not think of the importance that radio has had in our lives. It has become the soundtrack of our existence with certain songs bringing us back to memories of long ago. In today's media-saturated world of internet, cellphones and other communications, radio has been pushed to the background. But with streaming and satellite radio, it has moved forward once again.

I began my journey on WFCS (then at 90.1 FM) on Friday, May 5, 1978, broadcasting from 8 p.m. to midnight. My motivation then, and still today, was to play all the great music that commercial radio was ignoring. Their formatting and emphasis on profits had made commercial radio basically unlistenable. When WFCS started broadcasting in stereo and on April 13, 1982, we moved to a new frequency, 97.9 FM.

"Their formatting and emphasis on profits had made commercial radio basically unlistenable."

Many people have intercepted my orbit at the radio station over 40 years. Among them are Randy Borovsky ("The Cosmic Muffin"), Evan Kramer ("Evan in the Evening"), Chris Moller ("Mr. Charlie"), Randy Shamber ("Uncle John"), Ron Byczkiewicz ("Ron Doyle") and my current cohorts, Steve Strinie and Melissa Evans.

One of my favorite radio memories is when my younger brother, Jimmy, who was in high school in my early years on the radio, used to have keg parties at Paper Goods Pond in Berlin on Friday nights. Armed with only a portable radio, he would walk across the street to a pay phone

(remember them?) to call me and to request a song by the Doors (his favorite band). Because he was my brother, I would play his song within about 5 minutes along with a 15- to 20-minute Doors set. Jimmy passed away last year at the age of 55.

I have truly enjoyed creating a radio show with all of my own music selections plus listener requests. This was the way FM radio started out in the late '60s, with a free-form music format programmed by the disc jockey, not some corporation. This concept survives today only on college radio. Hopefully, I can continue to broadcast on "The Edge" WFCS 107.7 FM, "Where the Music *still* Matters!"

Editor's Note: Bill Walsh attended the University of Missouri, but he's perhaps more invested in the Central community than most alumni. He put two daughters through Central. In 1995, Bill worked at Middletown's WMRQ-AM doing sales and commercial production. When Bill isn't absorbed in music or on the air, he's a sales representative for the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. Bill's popular Sunday Spectrum of progressive & obscure rock from the '60s to today is a WFCS institution and airs from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Curfews no match for 'Tommy go Round' --or The Buckinghams

By Deborah (Intravia) Wilson '70

I remember those 9:30 p.m. weekday curfews. Yep, it meant no late night painting the town. So, it was back to the room with no television--but we had a radio. With WCCS, curfews didn't matter and things stayed festive with requests and dedications. Tom Wilson, as Tommy go Round, filled the 670 AM airwaves every night from 8 p.m. until midnight with the coolest music.

Backstage view of The Buckinghams Winter Weekend concert at Welte Auditorium in 1968.

His request line was very popular, especially with the dorm girls where I lived in Marcus White Hall. It was 1967, and Tom made a campus name for himself radiating from the small transmitter in the building that was connected to the WCCS studio in the Student Center by a telephone line, carrier current broadcasting as it was called.

He was a freshman that year. When he heard WCCS being played throughout the Student Center one afternoon, he was hooked and determined to be part of the club. Tom met with then General Manager Pete Kemp, "The Kemper" '70, who guided him through the FCC test to earn his broadcasting license.

Back then, the station received the latest record releases from distributors and new groups and the deejays would choose the weekly hit. One of my memories at the radio station, along with doing news, was sorting out all those 45 rpm records in the record library.

Like many of us, Tom was a devoted WPOP fan. WPOP was more than just the Top-40 rock station down the street in Newington, but a supporter of the radio club. Tom enjoyed two daily trips to WPOP to pick up the station's Associated Press and United Press International news and sports copy, along with weather reports from the National Weather Service. Tom's regular listeners will always recall his signature sign off: "Never let the sun set on angry words and I'll be talkin' to ya," followed by his requisite final song, "Georgia on my Mind" by Ray Charles. (Paul Koscak '73, contributed to this story)

Editor's note: A nice perk of being a radio club or Central Recorder member was an opportunity to mingle with one of the many top rock bands that regularly performed at Central. Deborah Wilson, a member of both, spent a few unforgettable moments backstage at Welte Auditorium with The Buckinghams. The smash Chicago group ("Mercy, Mercy, Mercy," "Kind of a Drag," "Susan") headlined Central's 1968 Winter Weekend. ***Deborah is wearing the mini skirt, seated next to some band members sporting that I've-got-it-made grin.*** *She's now a retired Spanish teacher living in Ellington, CT.*

Selling Radio

(or It's a good thing we didn't need to rely on advertising for income!)

By John Sarra '73

Back in the early 1970s, if you were a member of the radio station and had a show, you were encouraged to contribute something behind the scenes. I was a business major, so my natural inclination was to help out on the business side of things.

When I joined the station in September of '70, Jim McManus was the business manager and handled all the bills, arranging for the AT&T "long lines" for the away football and basketball games we used to broadcast, travel for any radio station business (which was essentially the annual IBS radio convention) and overseeing the Advertising Department. No one occupied that role, so I gladly volunteered to be the "advertising manager."

John Sarra (left) produced some ads as memorable as the songs he played. Also in the studio is Melissa Evans '85 and Peter Ciparelli '73.

Keep in mind, because the station had a non-commercial broadcast license, we couldn't really accept cash for advertising, which would have been nice because we had to fight for funds along with all of Central's other clubs. So, we had an arrangement called "commodity and service exchange" which says we will produce your advertisement and broadcast it in exchange for some commodity or service.

You can imagine that a place like *The Stereo Bar* or *Radio Shack* would be desirable advertisers because the station's Engineering Department equipment budget was a major portion of the funds that the Program Council doled out to us and they always needed something to keep that Gates board humming. Likewise, the Music Department was ecstatic when we would land a music store because our record subscription services were sometimes lacking for the new releases that never seemed to be included.

"...most of it ended up being graft for needy radio station members--especially the highly desirable free Whopper cards..."

But what about merchandise from a head shop, clothing store, car wash or even *Burger King*? You know where this is going. Supposedly, these were things that could be used for contests and giveaways and, in fact, some of that actually reached our listeners. But in reality, most of it ended up being graft for needy radio station members--especially the highly desirable free *Whopper* cards or freebies from the *Little Drummer Boy* restaurant right around the corner from campus.

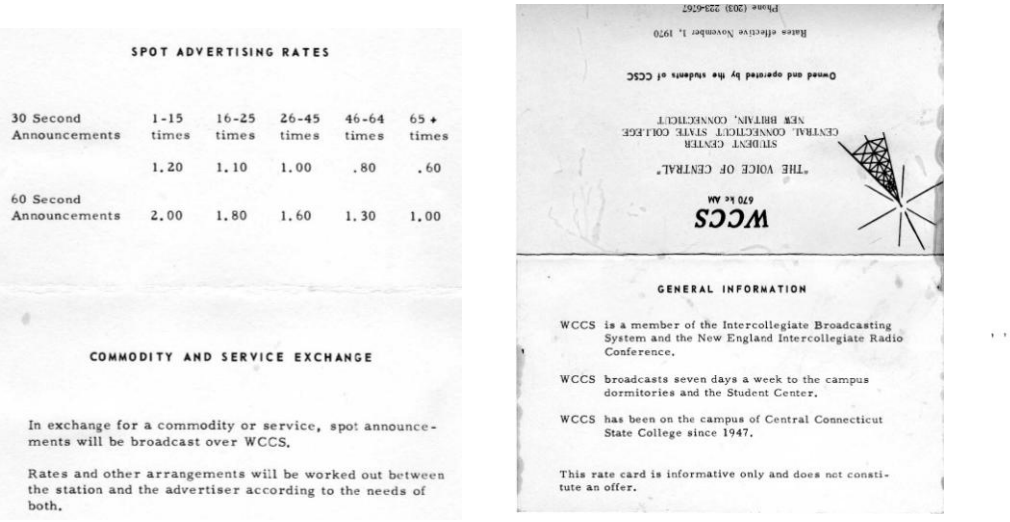
The Advertising Department proved to be a great training ground for many of us. We had to use our sales and negotiating skills to land advertisers and our creativity and production skills to produce the ads. Most of them were pretty terrible (see the link that follows), but the experience was certainly a lot of fun.

Some of the most memorable ads for me were:

- Paul Koscak's *Stereo Bar* ads set to Sugerloaf's "Green Eyed Lady" with the tag "When you have a tall thirst for good music".
- Dianne Zareski's *Elaine Powers Figure Salon* ad with Santana's "Samba Pa Ti" (I also recorded a version which included the line, "…remember girls, most guys look before they act." Ouch! Can you imagine getting away with that today?)
- My ad for *Top Notch Car Wash* where I coined the slogan "A clean car is a nice reflection on you."

Jim McManus was on the three-year plan (he actually graduated from Central in three years), so I stepped away from advertising and into his role as business manager when he graduated in 1971. But some of my fondest memories of the radio station were during that one-year writing and producing those ads.

John Sarra, a technical communications consultant, resides with his wife, Eve '74, in Monroe, CT.



SPOT ADVERTISING RATES

	1-15 times	16-25 times	26-45 times	46-64 times	65 + times
30 Second Announcements	1.20	1.10	1.00	.80	.60
60 Second Announcements	2.00	1.80	1.60	1.30	1.00

COMMODITY AND SERVICE EXCHANGE

In exchange for a commodity or service, spot announcements will be broadcast over WCCS.

Rates and other arrangements will be worked out between the station and the advertiser according to the needs of both.

GENERAL INFORMATION

WCCS is a member of the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System and the New England Intercollegiate Radio Conference.

WCCS broadcasts seven days a week to the campus dormitories and the Student Center.

WCCS has been on the campus of Central Connecticut State College since 1947.

This rate card is informative only and does not constitute an offer.

WCCS
670 kc AM
"THE VOICE OF CENTRAL"
Central Connecticut State College
1615 Stanley Street
New Britain, Connecticut 06050

WFCS
90.1 FM 670 AM
This is to certify that _____ is a member of Radio Station WFCS, serving in the capacity of _____
Expiration Date _____
Signature of Bearer
Station Manager

WFCS-NEWS
PRESS
Serving Central Connecticut
Please Extend all Courtesies to Named Bearer

A few of the nifty handouts WCCS and WFCS sales staff used to draw business. Even by 1970s standards, merchants got a lot for their money. Click the link below to hear a few of John's ads.

WCCS commercials from the early 1970s.

She finds station 'home away from home'

By Victoria Minervino '19

When I started college, I had just come from a high school where music meant everything: Chorus, music theory, musical theater, and chamber choir had all become what kept me sane in high school but also filled my heart. At Central, I didn't have any of those classes and as my first semester of college wore on, I felt less and less like myself. I had become friends with this guy, Mike Mason, who would come into Sheridan Hall, where I was living at the time, and bring us cookies and play video games and one day he asked if I knew about the campus radio station. Until then, I had only heard the music playing from the hallway in passing and it was generally heavy metal which--no offense to all our metal heads--just isn't my cup of tea. I told Mike this, but he insisted that I sign up. The next morning, I filled out an application and started training in the 2016 spring semester.

Victoria Minervino (right) on the job as the station's public relations director even during Homecoming 2017, handing out some well-appreciated WFCS hats and other station memorabilia to WFCS alumni, from left, Robb Warner '77, Elaine Miner '84 and Steve Meade '76.

"When I finally got to do my show for the first time, it felt like home."

I spent the next four weeks getting to know the staff, getting my feet wet in how all this new equipment worked and trying not to seem intimidated by my new surroundings. When I finally got to do my show for the first time, it felt like home. While I was incredibly nervous (and you could definitely tell), I finally felt like myself again.

Getting to talk music, current events, and how music is growing and changing is everything I used to do. But doing that now with an audience is something I only previously imagined.

At first, I didn't think that WFCS would become my home away from home; but now I get to run station events, merchandising and public relations. I didn't think that I would meet my best friends in college. I write this with optimism and pride in our station and our WFCS family. We have so many new and wonderful staff, community volunteers that always give me their best advice in radio and in life, and of course, our wonderful student DJs that always give it their all. I'm proud of how much we've grown as a station in numbers and overall and I am so looking forward to the future. We definitely wouldn't be where we are today without our amazing alumni so for that, I thank all of you.

Victoria Minervino,'19, is a strategic communication major with a minor in sociology and WFCS public relations director. She plans on pursuing a career in crisis management. ***Listen to Victoria Monday's from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.***

A second look is what it took

By Megan Colleran '21

I walked through CCSU's campus for the first time in January of 2017, with my father. We were heading toward the bookstore when we passed by the station's window. It was him who suggested that I try it out. He had been involved in professional media back in his heyday: being on a radio show, filming commercials, having a split-second cameo in a Billy Joel music video. I admit, it intrigued me, but shrugged it off. Public speaking was never my strong suit, and the only people in radio booths are witty, loud, and confident. My dad brought the subject up again during my orientation, with pretty much the same response.

My love for music has been gradual, but looking back, I can see just how vital a role it plays in my life. My favorite childhood movies were all musicals and having a playlist ready to fill my three-hour daily commute during high school was a necessity. I can't sing if my life depended on it, and notes and chords are a foreign language to me. Despite this, music has always played a large part in my life, just in more unconventional ways.

"...the only people in radio booths are witty, loud and confident."

I almost passed by the WFCS 107.7 booth during frosh week, but I stopped after taking a second look. Something had changed: I lost my father four days before the semester started. Having a newfound, raw appreciation for just how quickly things can change, I signed up. Despite my own misgivings, I am so thankful to have joined the station. I'm happy to have found a way to be involved with music, despite not being musically inclined.

Although I've only been here a few months, the support and humor the station members continuously provide gives me a reason to smile each day. After feeling a little lost for some time, being a newly appointed music director has given me a sense of purpose which I am especially thankful. I still have much to learn, but I look forward to growing professionally and personally through this station and will always be indebted to those who have extended their knowledge and friendship to me when I needed it most.

Megan Colleran '21, is a media studies major and co-director of WFCS's radio 200s music department. She plans on pursuing a career in television and film production.

WFCS music: wide, well-planned spectrum

By Megan Colleran '21

WFCS is split into four music departments: Radio 200, Metal, Urban, and RPM/Electronic. Upon joining, new DJs choose the department which best fits their overall music preferences. Radio 200 encompasses all of the music that doesn't fall under the other three categories. DJs in that department host a wide variety of shows, playing pop, indie, alternative, punk, classic rock and other selections. By separating the station into music departments, it also makes adding/playing songs from "the wall" easier, since DJs can easily access added submissions from their folders.

My co-director and I receive music from multiple record labels and promotional companies, and review each of them to determine if it's something that would be played off of the digital wall. The Radio 200 department is very diverse in preferences and we try our best to make sure there are options for every taste.

The wall is a digital collection of songs our music directors add from the submissions we get in the mail or online. We require any DJ with a two-hour music show to play eight songs off the wall of their respective department. (There's a Radio 200 Wall, Metal Wall, etc.) The collections are mostly on iTunes on the station's shared MacBook Pro, which stays in the booth at all times.

The term "indie" has fluctuated over recent years. First, it was a term used to describe music independently produced by bands, garage bands, if you may, not by large record companies. Nowadays, it's a genre in itself, which encompasses a wide range of songs which are difficult to classify into a single sound. It tends to shy away from familiar commercially-driven music, with lyrics and instrumentals that are more substantial than you'd find in a Top-40's hit.